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Navigating Business Resources Using Concept Maps

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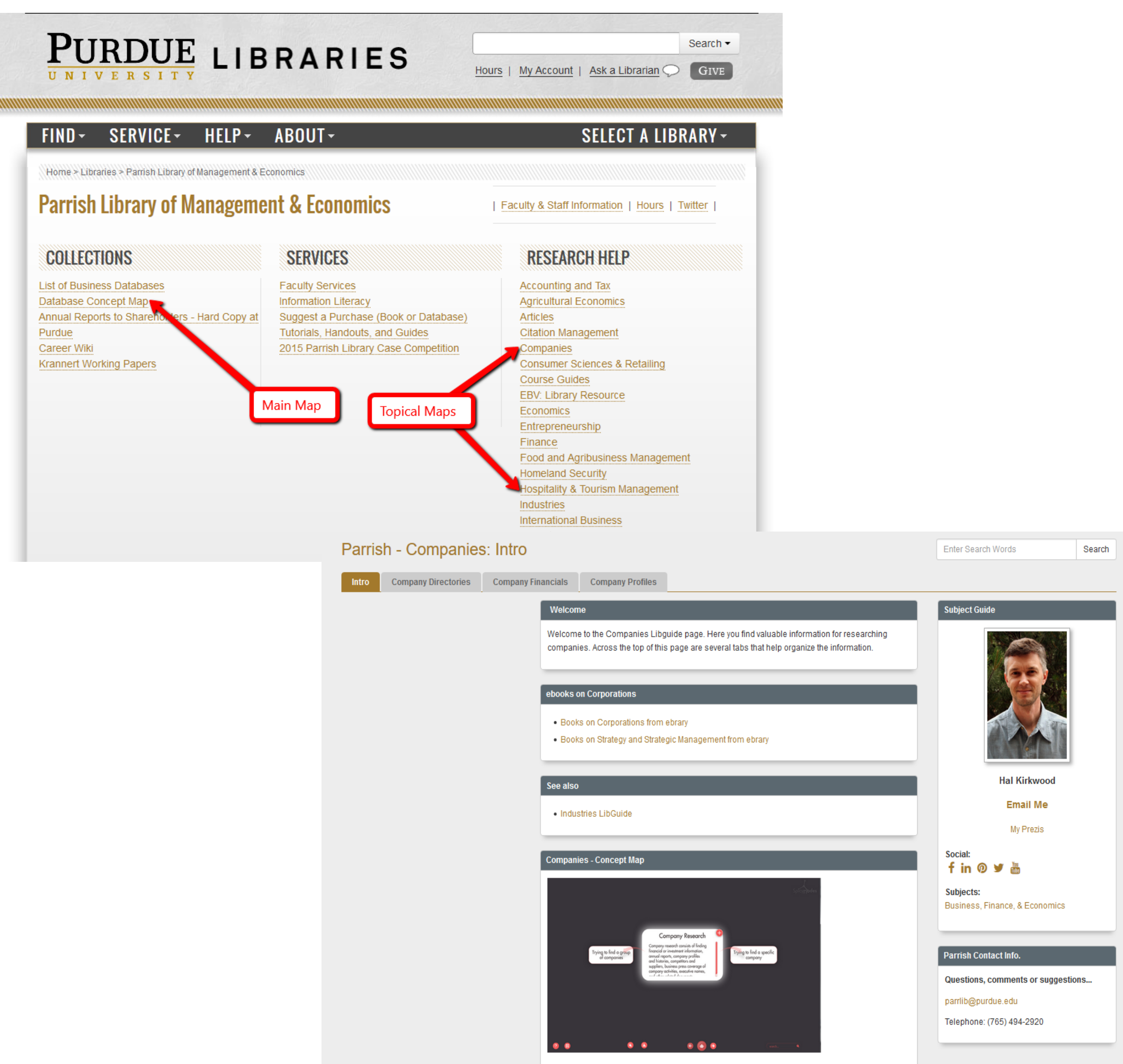
Navigating Business Resources Using Concept Maps

Introduction

Navigating the array of business databases is a recurring challenge for students. The spread of LibGuides, and similar database lists, across library websites has created an abundance of tabbed lists of resources. As helpful as Libguides are for providing access to these resources they can also seem quite overwhelming to students who are simply trying to find the answer to their question.

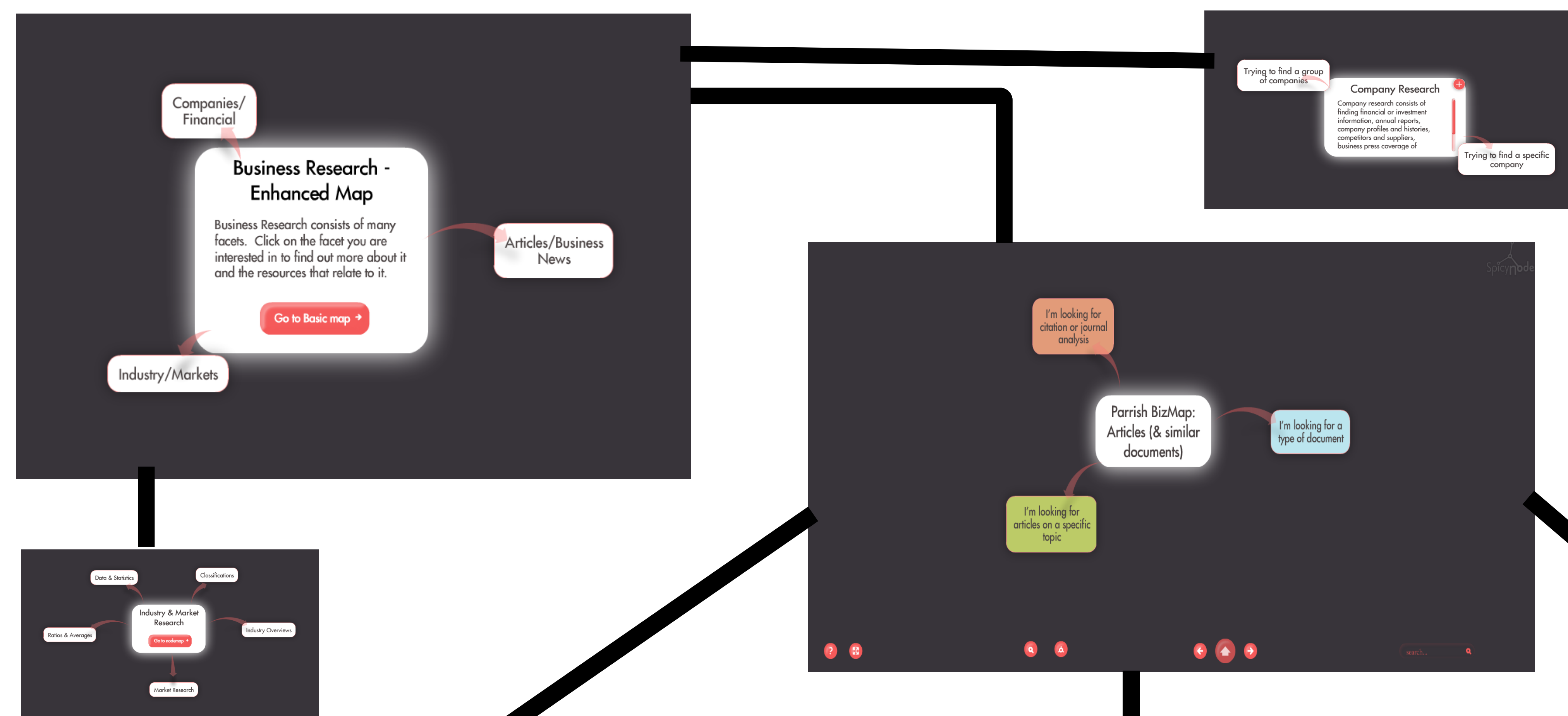
Concept Mapping is a process where prior knowledge is organized and displayed visually using a method of shapes and lines to show relationships across the information content. It is an effective method for displaying individual understanding of a subject. It can also be effective in transferring conceptual knowledge.

The goal of this project is to create subject-specific concept maps to aid students in selecting appropriate databases for their information need. The maps will be designed to connect with the students' likely information questions; in effect giving them a 'decision' map that will guide them to a likely resource based on the choices they make traversing the map. These maps will serve as a supplement or alternative to our already existing Libguides.



Exposure

The concept maps are linked directly from the Parrish Library's homepage, as well as within the subject guide links. They are embedded as an image to display what the map will look like for the user. The maps are also highlighted during instruction sessions.

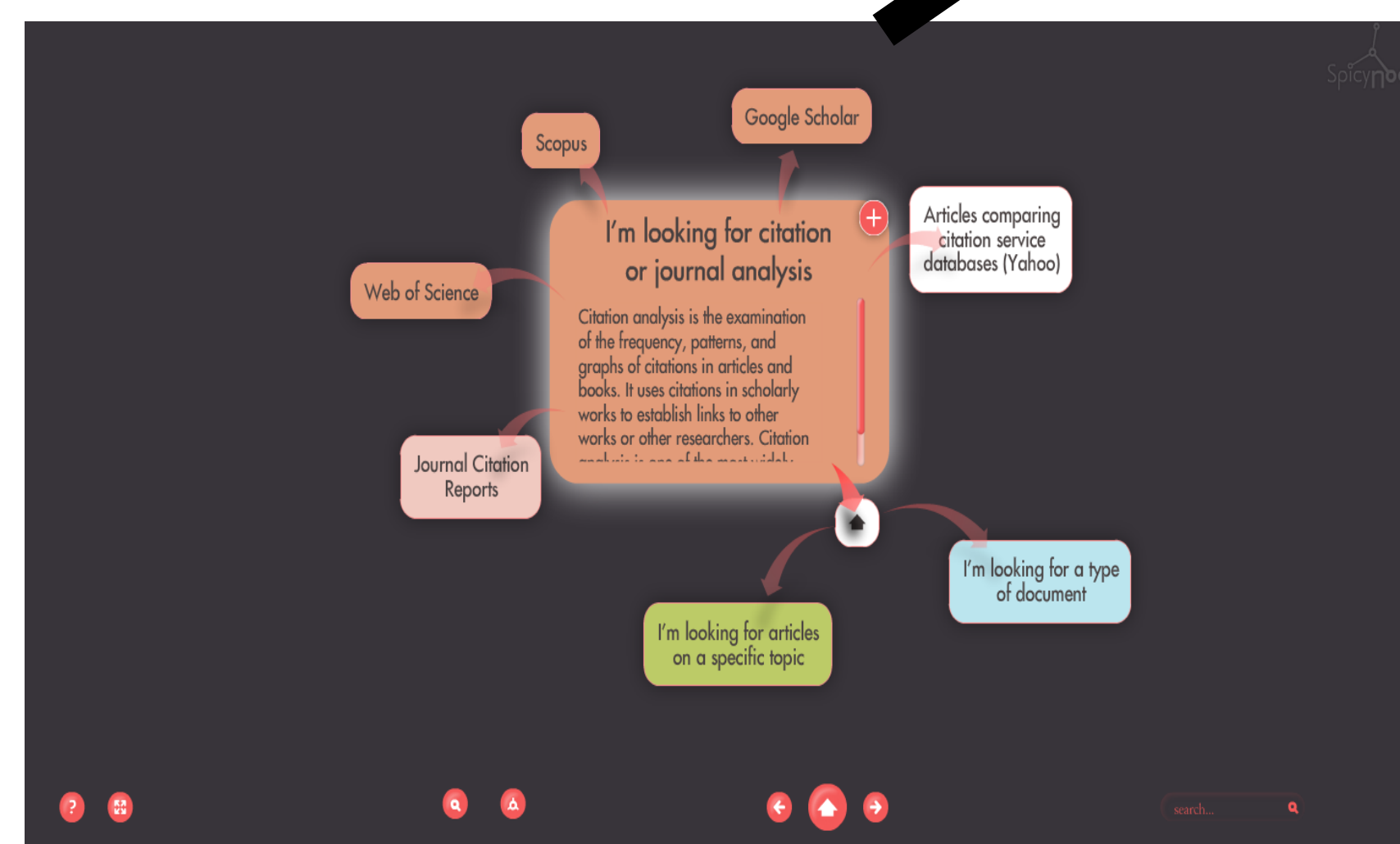


SpicyNodes

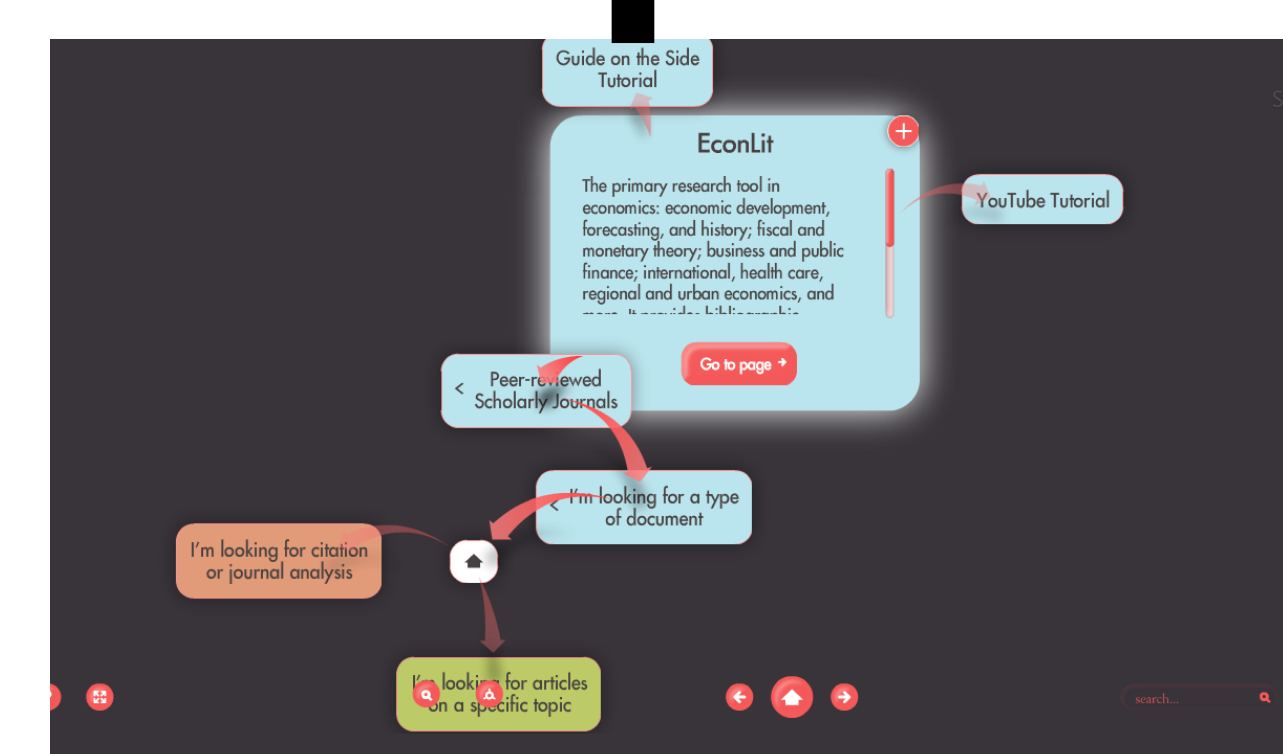
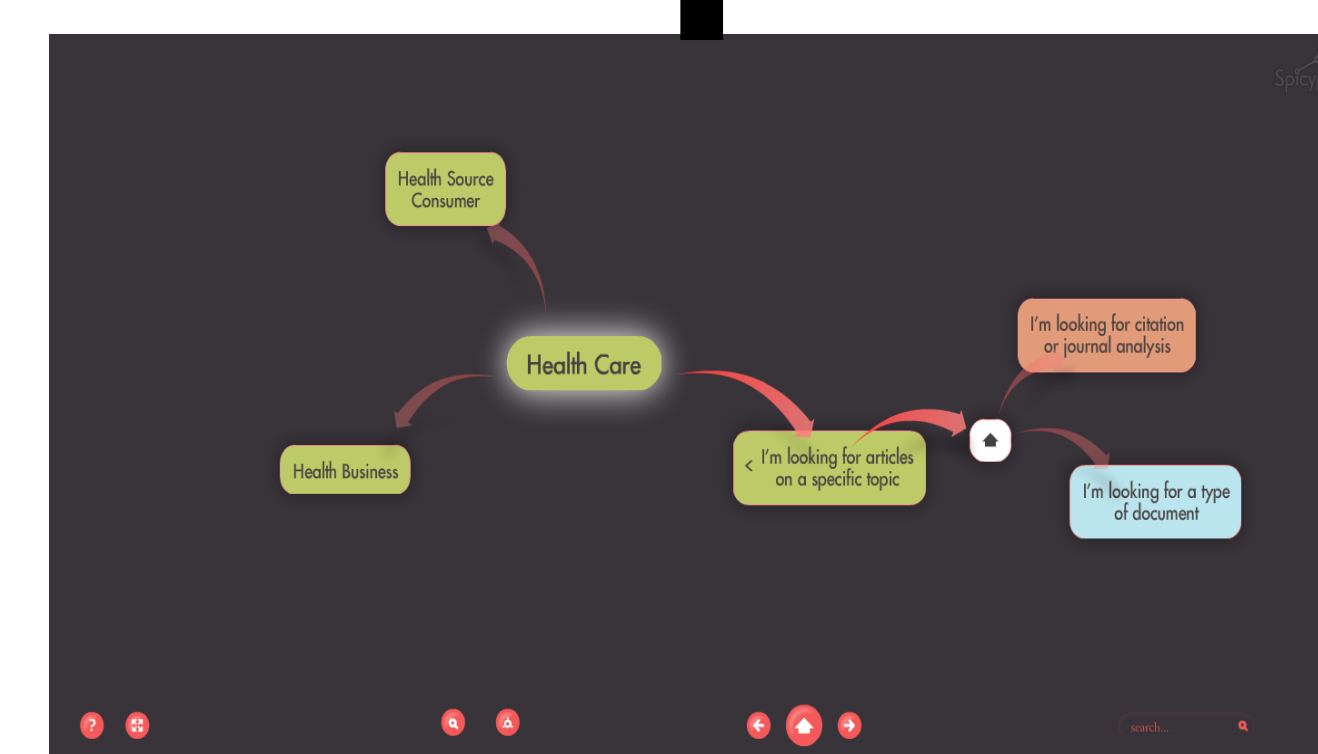
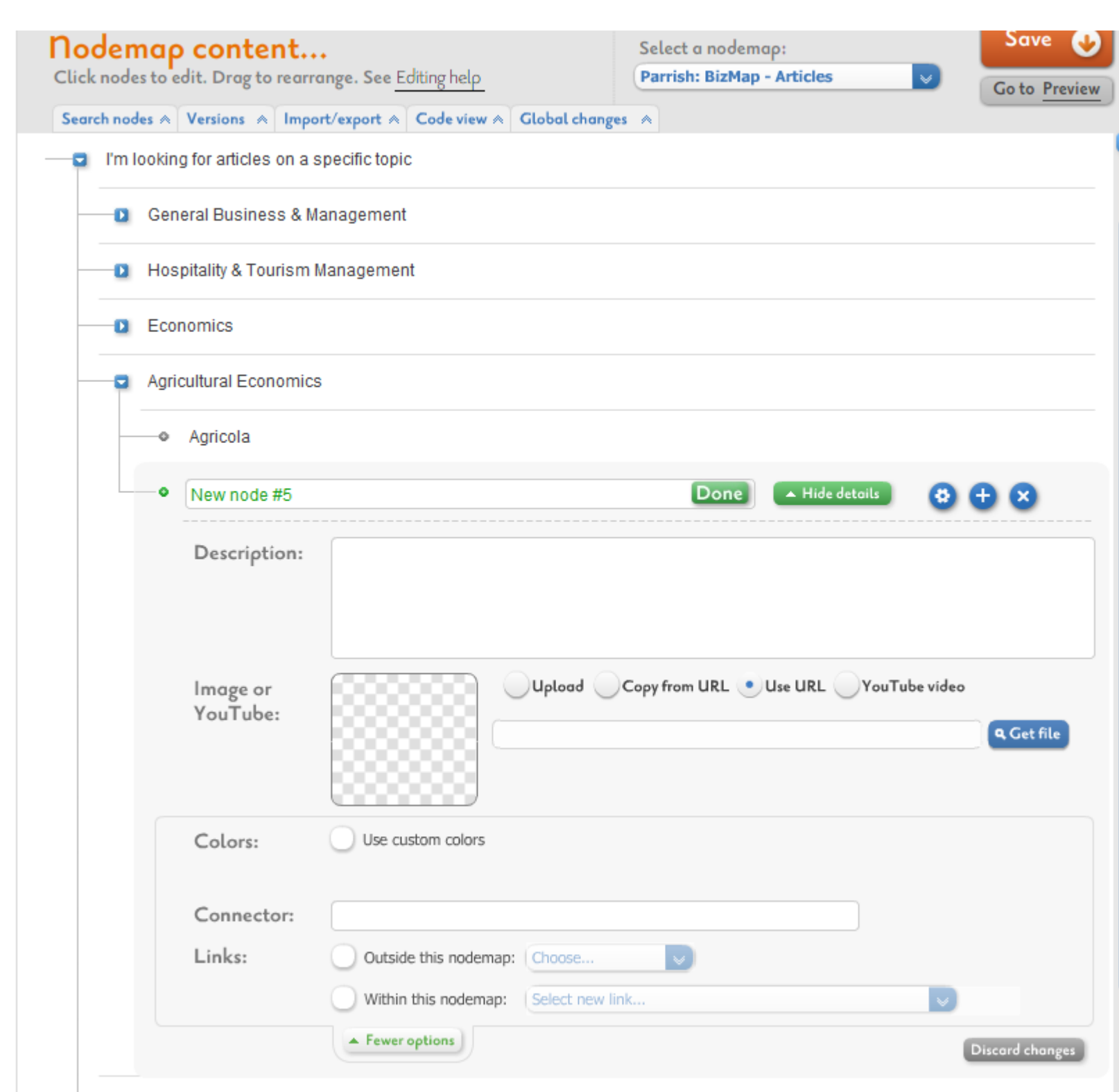
SpicyNodes.com was selected as the preferred mapping tool for its varied features and functionality, ability to connect within a map and to a separate map, ability to reuse resources, and its overall elegance and attractiveness.

Numerous tools were evaluated including:

Coggle
 Bubbl.us
 IHMC Cmap
 Lucid Chart
 Mapul
 Mindmeister
 Mindomo
 Spiderscribe.net



The internal view of SpicyNodes shows how the maps, nodes, and resources are added and edited.

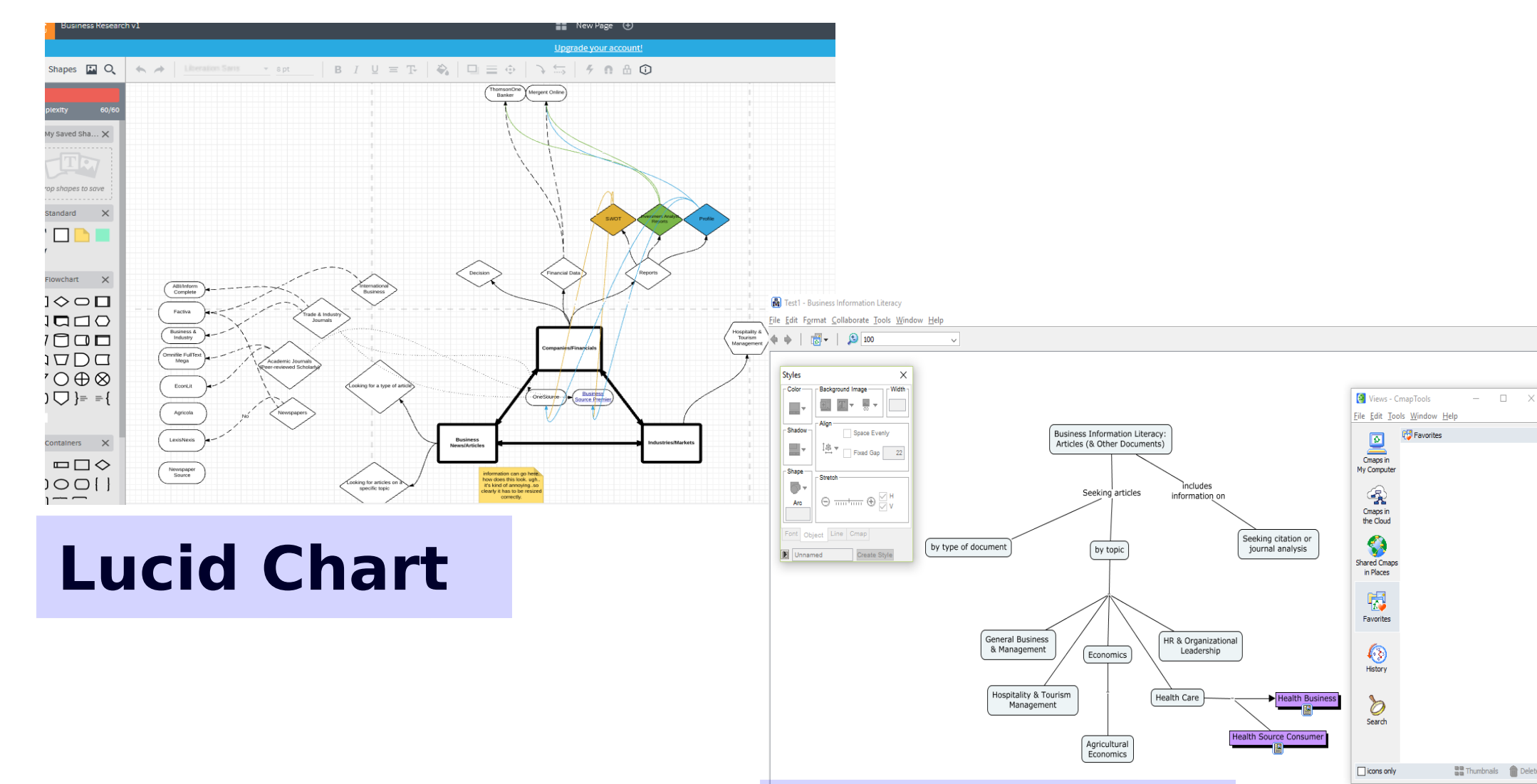


Challenges

Key challenges include the time and effort to create the map. Especially designing the questions from the user perspective and providing an adequate, but not overwhelming amount of additional information.

Future Plans

Developing the maps is the primary focus. There is some concern that SpicyNodes may not continue to support, or even offer, the mapping tool. This will require rebuilding the maps in an alternative tool. Lucid Chart and Cmap are the 2 alternative mapping tools under consideration.



Lucid Chart

IHMC Cmap

Articles of Interest

Carnot, M., Dunn, B., and Canas, A. Concept Maps vs Web Pages for Information Searching and Browsing. Florida Institute for Human and Machine Cognition. (2001) [<http://bit.ly/105Q59s>]

Novak, J. and Canas, A. The Theory Underlying Concept Maps and How to Construct and Use Them. Technical Report IHMC CmapTools 2006-01 Rev 2008-01 Institute for Human Machine Cognition. [<http://cmap.ihmc.us/docs/theory-of-concept-maps>]

Zwaal, W., and Otting, H. The Impact of Concept Mapping on the Process of Problem-based Learning. The Interdisciplinary Journal of Problem-Based Learning, v6, n1 (Spring 2012)